

# Exceptional People, Innovative Practices

*We know people are our strength. In fact, attracting, training, supporting, and rewarding our youth, volunteers, and employees is our most important investment. We want people to flourish, to have a chance to change their lives because of 4-H.*

## **Goal 1:**

**Extension and 4-H will recruit, hire and retain top-notch people who have a heart for working with youth and an enduring commitment to youth development.**

## **Building Human Capacity: Re-Staffing the Illinois 4-H Youth Development Program**

### **Situation:**

In the early 1990's, University of Illinois Extension reorganized, eliminating a number of youth development positions at the county level. Management responsibility for county-level youth programming was then shifted from professional to paraprofessional positions, with the remaining 15 youth educators given responsibility for 4-H program management and oversight for multicounty clusters. In 1996, a commission was appointed by the Chancellor of the University of Illinois to study Extension priorities and to make recommendations. After surveying citizen groups statewide, the commission identified the re-staffing of youth educator positions in all Extension units as a top priority, dependent upon support from the Illinois Legislature.

### **Program Description:**

In spring 1997, 4-H youth development specialists and educators held a 3-day statewide retreat entitled "Visioning for the Future." Decisions were made to: (1) prioritize efforts and eliminate programs that no longer met standards; (2) strengthen current programming; (3) identify new and exciting initiatives; and (4) tell the "good news" about Illinois 4-H and how the program is impacting the lives of youth, their families and communities in which they live.

To address the above goals, a new 4-H Strategic Plan was developed that involved grassroots leadership to determine future direction of the program. The quality of all curricula offerings was enhanced via a plan for revising outdated materials and by eliminating those that no longer met standards. A school enrichment jury review process was put into place to connect school enrichment curricula to Illinois Learning Standards.

A number of initiatives were launched to positively position the Illinois 4-H program in the statewide arena. The goal was to build linkages to state government and campus leaders knowing that such connections are crucial to the development of a strong 4-H program, inasmuch as these individuals provide the resources for supporting outreach to the youth of Illinois. Specifically, efforts were made to develop programs that would bring youth into contact with decisionmakers in a way that would enrich their experience, while at the same time gaining exposure for 4-H. These initiatives included:

- **Camp Clover**—in 1999 the Illinois Legislature awarded U of I Extension \$250,000 with a mandate to show impact. These funds were used to launch the now award-winning summer day-camp program designed to reach youth from limited-resource communities. Evaluation

data from this effort were extremely positive. This program, now in its third year, has reached nearly 12,000 youth. The specially designed curriculum for Camp Clover includes food, nutrition and food safety and projects in the natural and social science areas.

- **Legislative Ambassador Program**—since 1997, thousands of youth from across Illinois have been organized by legislative districts to discuss with legislators issues of concern to today's youth as well as to report on the impact the 4-H program has on their lives.
- **Legislative Connection**—This annual event, held at the State Capitol, involves 2,500 4-H members and their families. The goal of this activity is to provide youth with the opportunity to see state government in action and to make legislators aware of the breadth and depth of the 4-H program. Those in attendance take part in educational workshops on state government, tour the Capitol complex, meet with legislators, and take turns hosting the “Best of the Best 4-H Exhibition” (the display of 1,000+ award-winning state fair projects in the halls of the Capitol). Participants also attend a “Salute to Illinois” 4-H rally and luncheon and participate in call-in interviews with media from across the state. These events provide the perfect backdrop for Illinois Extension Partners (volunteers for Extension) to make the case for additional funding for 4-H.
- **Illinois State Fair** activities include (1) conference judging of 6,500+ projects; (2) *4-H CAN Make a Difference Food Drive* that has collected more than 400 tons of food via nearly 800,000 hours of volunteer service since its inception in 1997 (Illinois First Lady serves as honorary chair); (3) daily 4-H Clover Celebration programs at which youth and volunteers are recognized and dignitaries are introduced, including elected and appointed state officials and top university administrators (guests are taken on tours of the exhibited projects to emphasize the breadth and depth of the 4-H program and to introduce them to members of Illinois 4-H); and, (4) a 4-H presence in all major venues on the fair grounds.

### **Accomplishments and Impacts:**

To date, U of I Extension has hired 53 new youth educators and currently has 80+ youth professionals in the field and six specialists and two assistants at the State 4-H Office. Twenty youth development educators attended the retreat in 1997; 92 were in attendance in 2002. Benefits from this increase in human capacity include the fact that Illinois 4-H enrollment went from 210,000 in 1997, to 371,516 in 2001 (an increase of more than 86,000 over Year 2000). According to the latest USDA/ CSREES Annual 4-H Enrollment Report, Illinois has one of the fastest growing 4-H programs in the Nation.

### **Resource Commitment:**

In 2000 and 2001, the Illinois Legislature appropriated U of I Extension a combined total of \$3.5 million (recurring) for the hiring of youth educators at the unit/county level. Staff have been told that the above positively positioning activities and the documented improved quality of the 4-H program in Illinois are the reasons 4-H has gained widespread support from the Illinois House and Senate.

### **Collaborators:**

Extension Partners – a group composed of organizations and volunteers that serves as a grassroots advocate for increasing support for Extension's community-based programs through the legislative process.

**Contact Person(s):**

Janice A. Seitz, Ph.D., Assistant Dean and Director, University of Illinois Extension Youth Development; Chris Roegge, Ph.D., Specialist, University of Illinois Extension Youth Development, State 4-H Office, 302 East John Street, Champaign, IL 61820; Phone: 217-333-0910; Fax: 217-333-9287; E-mail: j-seitz@uiuc.edu and c-roegge@uiuc.edu

**Base program areas to which this program applies:**

4-H Youth Development

---

## **AmeriCorps, a Resource for 4-H Program Expansion**

**Situation:**

The traditional 4-H program has a busy calendar of events requiring many hours of work from the Extension office staff. In addition, there are many expansion programs that could be added, if time allowed. A need was identified to have additional program assistance in the office.

The AmeriCorps program enrolls individuals for a year of service and in return they receive a living allowance and an educational award. Many individuals associated with the 4-H program could benefit from participation in the AmeriCorps program. These include recent 4-H graduates or volunteer leaders and parents who may plan to return to school or the workforce.

**Program Description:**

The use of AmeriCorps members in extension work provides benefits to the organization as well as to the individuals. For the county 4-H program, members provide additional manpower, widen the sphere of community contacts and bring their expertise to programming. Members' service objectives are tailored to their strengths and skills. For example, one member has an interest in dog obedience and dog grooming. She was able to start a 4-H Kennel Club, conduct dog obedience classes, and prepare and accompany a team of youth and parents to the statewide Dog Bowl competition. In return, the member will receive an education award to continue her studies in this area and also gained valuable relevant experience to add to her resume. The AmeriCorps motto is, "Getting Things Done." They look for objectives providing direct service in the areas of human service, protection of the environment, literacy and after-school programming. These objectives closely align with the youth development goals of the 4-H program.

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

Participation as an AmeriCorps service site requires approximately 0.2 FTE commitment of time by the 4-H Extension Educator. This includes time for the recruitment, training and supervision of AmeriCorps members. Also required is the preparation of service objectives, quarterly reports and evaluations. Individuals serving as AmeriCorps members have an opportunity to evaluate their year of service. Members completing their experience indicate that they feel a high degree of satisfaction due to the flexible nature of extension work that provides them with an opportunity for personal growth in an area of interest. The extension experience also provides educational opportunities through inservice training.

**Accomplishments and Impacts: Outcomes**

Four AmeriCorps members were recruited and served at the Garrett County Extension Office in the past 2 years. They have provided program support for the community technology lab, character education, livestock ethics, kennel club, smokeless tobacco education, after-school programs, recycling, nutrient management program, 4-H camping program and the agricultural fair. The members have received an orientation to extension work, and opportunity to gain work skills and have received an education award in the amount of \$4,725 per year of service to further their education. In 2001, the Frostburg State University and its community partners received the Corporation for National and Community Service CEO Award from Harris Wolford. The award identified the ASTAR! AmeriCorps program as an outstanding community and college partnership. In the fall of 2002, at the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents Conference in Norfolk, Virginia, a team consisting of representatives from the Corporation for National and Community Service, Frostburg State University, Garrett County Extension and a past AmeriCorps member presented a seminar on the merits of using AmeriCorps resources for 4-H programming.

**Resource Commitment:**

The use of AmeriCorps members required a commitment of \$4,543 per member. However, the matching member support costs, provided from the Corporation for National Service, are \$11,104 per member. Funding for one member was obtained from income generated by user fees from the Western Maryland 4-H Center. Financial support for the second member comes from a variety of grant funding.

**Collaborators:**

The AmeriCorp program is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Each regional AmeriCorps site brings together a group of organizations that host members in the area. The ASTAR! AmeriCorps site, in western Maryland, has 15 collaborating agencies. These collaborators provide support to the program through shared member recruitment, joint programming and member training.

**Contact Person:**

Ann Sherrard, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Garrett County Extension 1916 Maryland Highway, Mt Lake Park, MD 21550; Phone: 301-334-6960; Fax: 301-334-6061; E-mail: as319@umail.umd.edu

**Basic program areas to which this program applies:**

Community Resource & Economic Development  
Leadership & Volunteer Development  
4-H Youth Development

---

## **4-H Shooting Education Camp**

**Situation:**

Developing the knowledge and skills needed to be a capable, coping, caring and contributing member of our modern society is an increasingly difficult task that requires a diverse mix of adult role models for today's youth. In the past, there were many extended-family members involved in children's lives to support youth development. Today, families are smaller and have

spread out over the country and the world to the point that many young people have few positive adult role models in their lives.

**Program Description:**

The Ohio 4-H Shooting Education Camp Program has experienced great success in recruiting exceptional youth and adult volunteers to serve as shooting instructors, coaches and counselors for the 6-day resident camp program. The campers participated in 12 disciplines: Archery, Levels 1 and 2; .22 Rifle, Levels 1, 2 and Advanced; Shotgun, Levels 1, 2 and Advanced; Muzzle loading; Living History, Levels 1 and 2; and, Hunting and Wildlife. Mornings were spent shooting in their major discipline. Afternoons and evenings were devoted to sampling other shooting disciplines and enjoying traditional camp activities including swimming, boating, singing, recreation, fishing, crafts, nature education, ropes course and campfire. Those who fished cleaned their catch and prepared a tasty addition to the evening snack.

Adult and youth shooting coaches form partnerships with each shooter as the shooter works to overcome problems and improve scores. Each shooter on the line has had a shooting coach who focuses on the safety and technique for each shot or round of shots. The coaches help the shooter analyze problems and identify solutions. These partnerships in improvement help to develop strong personal relationships that reach beyond the camping environment.

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

The program leadership has been provided by a .04 FTE commitment by a state 4-H specialist and the details have been coordinated through the efforts of a .1 FTE commitment for the state 4-H shooting education professional. This professional time was supplemented in 2002 by more than 300 volunteer days of preparation and leadership for the camp.

The program began 5 years ago with 48 campers, and more than doubled to 113 campers and 34 staff in 2002. One of the key indicators of camper satisfaction is the number of returning campers. In 2002, only one out of three campers were first-year participants, and five campers had participated all 5 years!

On the written post-camp evaluation, 94 percent of the respondents rated the camp as really fun (a “4” or “5” on a 5-point Lichert-type scale). Only one camper gave the camp a negative rating and six were undecided. Other items on the evaluation provided support for the quality of the volunteers’ relationships with the campers. The campers overwhelmingly rated the instructors as well prepared (91 percent rated 4 or 5 ), caring about the camper (92 percent rated 4 or 5 ) and helping to improve shooting skills (95 percent rated 4 or 5 ). Even though the camp is planned and marketed as a specialized shooting education camp, the most often reported “favorite part of camp” was “meeting new friends.”

**Accomplishments and Impacts:**

On the post camp evaluation, 90 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had gained knowledge and skills that will help keep them safe in the future. In addition, the participants are making friends from all over the state and identifying with adult mentors who really care about them. One of the spinoffs of the program is that a group of 4-H members and leaders have formed an Ohio 4-H Competitive Shooting Team that is shooting throughout the year in open matches. A participant in this group became very ill in December 2001, and required several surgeries and weeks of therapy at Children’s Hospital. The coach of the

Shooting Team organized visits of team members complete with the patient's favorite fast food treats to help raise his spirits during this stay away from home and family.

The following quote from a 4-H member says it well:

*Each shooting sports instructor has an individual story. Each gives of him/herself so fully that there are hundreds of children to testify to their impact. The value of these volunteers is seen not in numbers on a page, not in any words I can write—but in the individual changed lives of children I have watched over the years. Hal Hardesty has taught me a lot about rifles and pistols as an instructor. He has also taught me teamwork, morals, patriotism and determination. His legacy will be of merciful justice and caring for others. I know that wherever I go, Hal will remember, care about and pray for me, and if I ever need anything, all I have to do is pick up the phone.*

**Resource Commitment:**

In addition to the \$200 registration fee paid by the participants the following contributed cash and/or products of the indicated value: Ohio Department of Natural Resources (\$1,000); Friends of the NRA (\$3,500); Federal Cartridge Corporation (\$1,000); Bass-Pro Shops, Inc. (\$1,000); Remington Arms, Inc. (\$1,000); Pepsi Cola Distributor ((\$500) and the National Wild Turkey Federation (\$1,600), for a total of \$9,600.

**Collaborators:**

Two Wildlife Professionals with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife

One Ohio Highway Patrol Officer

Four camp facility staff members.

**Contact Person(s):**

Dennis L Elliott, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, The Ohio State University, 2120 Fyffe Rd, Columbus, OH 43210; Phone: 614-292 4444; Fax: 614-292 5937; E-mail: [elliott.7@osu.edu](mailto:elliott.7@osu.edu)

---

**Goal 2:**

**4-H will design volunteer management systems that attract, retain and energize youth and adult volunteers with a progressive and enduring commitment to youth.**

## Salute to Excellence

**Situation:**

With more than 680,000 volunteers in the 4-H system today, there was a strong desire to recognize the role, skills and passion with which these volunteers worked. The Salute to Excellence program was designed to recognize individuals, yet is also aimed at continuing to promote volunteer involvement in 4-H programs and renew the satisfaction of volunteers with the work that they contribute every day.

**Program Description:**

The goal of the Salute to Excellence Awards is to honor individuals who serve as the best examples of 4-H volunteers. A recipient of one of the Salute to Excellence Awards should be a hardworking and dedicated volunteer, whose efforts have had a significant and positive impact on youth.

Two Salute to Excellence Awards will be given annually. One award, entitled "Lifetime Volunteer Award," will be given to an individual who has spent a lifetime volunteering for 4-H. The second award, entitled "Volunteer of the Year Award," will be given to an individual who has volunteered for 4-H for fewer than 10 years.

By nationally recognizing the dedication and successes of volunteer leaders, it is believed that more adults will be encouraged to become 4-H volunteers, and existing 4-H volunteers will feel that their work is respected, appreciated and recognized.

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

The program begins in late summer of every year with the distribution of nomination forms and an appeal to all states to nominate one individual in each category. Nominations are made by states and applications are submitted to National 4-H Council. Selection teams are convened and are composed of a cross-section of youth and adults involved in 4-H. Last year state participation levels were at just over 50 percent and that number is expected to increase as information about the program spreads.

**Accomplishments and Impact:**

More than 60 nominations were received from around the country last year. In April, the first awardees of the Salute of Excellence program were identified. Two women who had spent many years working with 4-H'ers in Montana were presented with a monetary award and received recognition throughout their community, state and country.

**Resource Commitment:**

Nearly \$200,000 from more than 256 individuals has been raised towards maintaining this program in perpetuity. National 4-H Council is also contributing staff talent in the maintenance of the program as well as in the raising of the funding necessary to endow this program in perpetuity. Former board member, Gene Swackhamer, has been vital in providing leadership for this program devoting not only his time, but also his money and his home to further this program and provide it with a strong foundation that will continue to flourish with the passage of time.

**Collaborators:**

This program is truly one that works from the ground up. Though National 4-H Council manages this program, the level of involvement comes from every community, every county and any state office wishing to nominate one of its own for national recognition. Collaboration begins with the youth of 4-H on whom the volunteers have the greatest impact. It continues with the states that provide the nominations as well as the selection teams who emerge from the field. It culminates at National 4-H Council, which houses and administers the program.

**Contact Person:**

Supriya Baily, Development Specialist, National 4-H Council, 7100 Connecticut Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815; Phone: 301-961-2866; Fax: 301-961-2894; Email: sbaily@fourhcouncil.edu

**Base Program areas to which this program applies:**

Leadership and Volunteer Development

4-H Youth Development

---

**4-H at Camp Hialeah, Pusan, Republic of Korea****Situation:**

Camp Hialeah in Pusan, South Korea, is a unique U.S. Army post in that it is very small, both in size and number of families with children. The base affords a safe haven for kids because everyone knows everyone, and generally families look after one another. Children are safe playing on the playgrounds or riding their bikes down the open, serene streets. Camp Hialeah's Child and Youth Services (CYS) is funded as a middle school and teen program; the School Age Services (SAS) was discontinued years ago when the low numbers of elementary school-aged children did not justify the expense of a SAS program. Younger children thus were offered little in the way of life skills or other educational programming at Camp Hialeah's CYC Center.

**Program Description:**

In April of 2001, numerous parents of elementary age children approached CYC about offering programs for their children. Having worked as a 4-H agent for numerous years in the States, Truda Roper, the new Child & Youth Services Program Director, realized that 4-H clubs were a perfect fit for Camp Hialeah Youth Services. On a shoestring budget, she began the 4-H program for all children and youth (K-12). Truda and another staff member conducted a youth needs survey to identify particular 4-H projects that would be of interest to children and youth.

Next, they recruited two volunteers for each project club offered, and 4-H programming started with short-term project clubs based on the interests of both the children and volunteers. Because most clubs met directly after school, Youth Services provided a pick-up service for children participating in the club. A healthy snack was provided the 4-H members as well. A Theater Arts club met at the stage in the local, on-post cinema on two evenings a week for the summer. Membership ranged from six to 15 youth. Clubs offered for school-age youth during the first year of 4-H at Camp Hialeah included a 4-H Computer Club, 4-H Photography Club, 4-H Sewing Club, 4-H Small Animals Club, 4-H Eco-Kids Club and 4-H Korean Culture and Language Club. Later in the year, as a result of interest shown by 5-year-old children, CYC began a 4-H Cloverbud Club as well.

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

The success of 4-H clubs stems from how the CYC Director developed an extensive network for identifying capable and dedicated volunteers with skills and/or interest in the club's subject matter. Offering the clubs at convenient times for parents and kids also contributed to high participation and overall success. Overall, staff, volunteers and the command are pleased with how 4-H enhanced existing programs and allowed them to expand programs for the elementary-age children.

**Accomplishments and Impacts:**

The overall 4-H community club has a total of 30 members, 20 volunteer leaders and six staff members. Trying to choose the most successful clubs is difficult; the following are examples of some exceptional groups.



**The 4-H Small Animals Club**, lead by the veterinarian on base, was very popular with 13 members of varying ages. The youth had the opportunity to visit the Vet Clinic, view all the equipment used for surgery and interact with a wonderful dog in the clinic. They also viewed a demonstration by the dogs used for sniffing out bombs. The club's volunteer leader displayed good self-confidence and had good control of the group.

**The 4-H Eco-Kids Club** targeted youth ages 8-12 years of age, and had approximately eight members. The Club was lead by three leaders who are very concerned about environmental issues. Youth researched information on the Internet about various environmental causes, learned about the various factors that contribute to environmental deterioration, raised funds to purchase an acre of the rainforest through Nature Conservancy, and on Arbor Day planted a blossoming tree across from the Youth Center.

**The 4-H Cloverbud Club** enjoyed great success, thanks to strong parent volunteer participation. Each parent committed to arranging and/or leading two program sessions.

**Resource Commitment:**

A network of volunteers enabled CYS to offer the 4-H program to children and youth at Camp Hialeah. The volunteers have also help installation staff to overcome the biggest obstacle to the program: cumbersome paperwork and documentation required by both MCE and the Army.

**Collaborators:**

Eighth U.S. Army, Korea Child and Youth Services, Pusan National Museum, Kang-sang University, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Maryland Cooperative Extension, The Nature Conservancy, Population Connections, Camp Hialeah Army Community Services, Camp Hialeah Volunteer Coordinator, Camp Hialeah Veterinary Clinic, Camp Hialeah Women's Club, Camp Hialeah-Public Works, Eighth U.S. Army, Korea Area IV MWR Divisions (Bowling Center, Fitness Center, Recreation Center, Arts & Crafts Center, and Marketing)

**Contact Person(s):**

Truda Roper, Child and Youth Services Director, Camp Hialeah, Pusan, Korea  
US Army, 20<sup>th</sup> Support Group (Camp Hialeah, Pusan); Unit 15181; MWR, CYS; APO AP 96259-0270; Phone: (from the U.S.) 011-82-51-801-3536; E-mail: ropert@usfk.korea.army.mil

Dean W. Moore, Youth Development Specialist, USDA/Army Youth Development Project  
Eighth U.S. Army, Korea; ACofS, G-1, MWR Div., Unit 15236, APO, AP 96206-5236;  
Phone: (from the U.S.) 011-82-2-7915-5227, Fax: (from the U.S.) 011-82-2-7915- 5420; E-mail: moored@usfk.korea.army.mil

Heidi L. Haugen, Youth Development and Technology Specialist, USDA/Army Youth Development Project  
Eighth U.S. Army, Korea; ACofS, G-1, MWR Div., Unit 15236, APO, AP 96206-5236; Phone: (from the U.S.) 011-82-2-7915-3003; Fax: (from the U.S.) 011-82-2-7915-5420; E-mail: haugenh@usfk.korea.army.mil

**Base program areas to which this program applies:**

4-H Youth Development

---

## **4-H Field and Stream Program**

### **Situation:**

The target audiences for the Mississippi 4-H Field and Stream program are youth between the ages of 8 and 18 years of age, parents/guardians, and volunteer leaders. The needs addressed are firearm safety and managing resources for wildlife and fisheries.

### **Program Description:**

The Mississippi 4-H Field and Stream program is a natural resources educational program designed to teach youth and adult leaders essential life skills through shooting sports and managing resources for wildlife and fisheries. The goals of the program are to:

- Encourage understanding of natural resource management concepts through participants' interests in shooting, hunting and fishing.
- Enhance development of participants' self-concept, character and personal growth through safe, educational and socially acceptable involvement in shooting and wildlife and fisheries conservation activities.
- Teach safe and responsible use of firearms and archery equipment including decisionmaking, self-discipline and cooperation.
- Promote the highest standards of safety, sportsmanship and ethical behavior.
- Expose participants to a broad array of vocational activities related to shooting sports and other wildlife and fisheries activities and events.
- Strengthen families through lifelong recreational activities.
- Complement and enhance the impact of existing safety and hunter education programs.

### **Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

The commitment of FTE's to the program varies. Annually, five to eight adult volunteers from Mississippi attend a national training session to be certified in one discipline area—hunting, fishing or one of the shooting sports options. These key national-level trainers then commit for a minimum of 3 years to train adult volunteers in Mississippi. Two 12-hour training workshops for adults are scheduled in the state each year. Those attending the workshops are certified to work back in their counties with the youth. The certification is the best model of Master Volunteers and also offers the best possible youth and adult partnership. The program is currently conducted in more than 80 percent of all Mississippi counties. A comprehensive program can easily involve 50 to 80 hours annually of direct youth contact in instruction alone.

### **Accomplishments and Impacts:**

The groups reached through the Field and Stream program gain a significant amount of quality training that, in essence, increases participants' knowledge about issues centered around areas related to natural resources and shooting sports. The greatest noticed impact is the increased family involvement and support to the youth participants. Both youth and adult participants gain skills in safety, decisionmaking, and many other skills needed to be productive and responsible citizens. Testimonials from NRA training counselors, NRA instructors, National Archery Association instructors, hunter education instructors and many others applauded the efforts of this program.

Volunteer Leaders, parents, staff and others in the Mississippi program all agree that the 4-H Field and Stream program is a great program upon which to model family and youth development.

**Resource Commitment:**

The Mississippi Field and Stream program is funded and supported by a number of organizations, including the Mississippi State University Extension Service; State 4-H Department; MSU Department of Wildlife and Fisheries; the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks; and, Chevron Companies.

**Collaborators:**

NRA, Federal Cartridge, National Archery Association (NAA), Hunter Education Department and Mississippi Volunteer Leaders Association.

**Contact Person:**

Larry Alexander, Extension 4-H Youth Development Specialist, Box 9641, Mississippi State, MS 39762; Phone: 662-325-3350; Fax: 662-325-5207; E-mail: [larrya@ext.msstate.edu](mailto:larrya@ext.msstate.edu)

**Base program areas to which this program applies:**

Leadership and Volunteer Development  
Family Development and Resource Management  
Agriculture  
4-H Youth Development

---

## **4-H Volunteer Core Competencies**

**Situation:**

A hallmark of the 4-H program is its strong volunteer leadership base. With changing demographics, many volunteers are not willing to make a long-term commitment, and many people are not willing to volunteer unless they have a well defined set of expectations. For these reasons, a consistent training program with a fundamental knowledge base was needed for volunteers and the county educators who are responsible for volunteer development and management.

**Program Description:**

Two thousand two hundred-seventeen 4-H volunteers have been certified through the Oklahoma 4-H Volunteer Certification Process. This is a management system for identifying, selecting, orienting, training, utilizing, recognizing and evaluating volunteers working within the 4-H program.

In an effort to further strengthen the management system, a Volunteer Action Team composed of volunteers and Extension educators from each district assisted in identifying the fundamental information needed by volunteers. This information was identified as the minimal knowledge necessary to effectively carry out assigned roles and responsibilities in planning, conducting and evaluating an individual, local or county program. Three Units were prepared and provided to county educators. The information within each unit is to be blended into subject matter training being provided to volunteers.

During the 2001-2002 program year an expanded Volunteer Action Team assisted in identifying the fundamental core competencies skills and behavioral indicators volunteers need to possess. The competencies identified included: Communication Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Flexibility, Decisiveness, Initiative, Organizational Skills, Service Orientation, Teamwork and Institutional Systems.

The fundamental information provided in Units 1-3 is the tool for teaching these desirable competencies and behavioral indicators to Oklahoma 4-H Volunteers.

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

A minimum of one Extension educator from each of the 77 counties received training and were encouraged to use a varied and diverse set of educational techniques to work competencies into county programming. The successful measurement of an individual's level of competency will require presenting the information on more than one occasion and by more than one means of delivery. Methods for delivering core competencies to 4-H volunteers will include one or more of the following: volunteer continuing education, newsletters, displays, web page correspondence, etc.

**Accomplishments and Impacts:**

- One hundred three county educators and program assistants participated in training for Unit 1—"This is 4-H."
- One hundred six county educators and program assistants have participated in Unit 2—"Getting the Most Out of the 4-H Experience."
- Each participant received a printed guide and CD-ROM as a tool for delivering and reinforcing the knowledge, competencies and behavioral indicators. The guide and CD contain teaching outlines, PowerPoint presentations, a home study series, handouts, resources and evaluations.
- Unit 3—"Ready Set Volunteer" is being introduced during the fall 2002 semester.

**Resource Commitment:**

Participants paid \$10 for the resources.

**Collaborators:**

Volunteer Action Team, composed of adult 4-H volunteers and extension educators, assisted with program development.

**Contact Person:**

Karla Knoepfli, Assistant State Specialist, Volunteer and Leadership Development, Oklahoma State University, 205 4-H Youth Development, Stillwater, OK 74078-6063; Phone: 405-744-8891; Fax: 405-744-6522; Email: [kknoepf@okstate.edu](mailto:kknoepf@okstate.edu)

**Other Base Program Areas this Program Applies to:**

Leadership & Volunteer Development

---

**Goal 3:**

**Extension and 4-H will invest in its people by providing exceptional learning opportunities.**

***Fa'asamoa—The Samoan Way-The Way of Our Ancestors***

*Talofa lava. Si o'u alofa. (Hello there. Greetings. I greet you with love.)*

**Situation:**

*Fa'asamoa* the Samoan Way has kept Samoans strongly nationalistic. Today, *fa'asamoa* is facing its greatest challenge as a new generation is brought up on foreign-taught theories of individualism and personal freedom, threatening the old traditions. The Samoan culture is one of diversity with native peoples of the Pacific of similar origin and related languages, customs and cultures, yet each is different. American Samoa has a tradition of warmth and geniality—an open society—and is eager to continue this tradition.

**Program Description:**

This program was part of a CYFAR State Strengthening Grant that was a collaboration of island nations in the Pacific. The cross-cultural awareness and preservation initiative surfaced as a substantive focus area. It has fostered a high level of pride in heritage while affording participants the ability to perpetuate indigenous practices and knowledge in the face of the new millennium.

The purpose of the cross-culture project in American Samoa was to promote Samoan traditional costumes, art, crafts, language music, and culture.

The importance of the identity, appreciation of uniqueness and diversity was also emphasized. Workshop topics included: Samoan music (*Pese*); dance (*Siva*); oratory, legends and myths; freehand tapa-making (*Siapo*); fabric printing (*Elei*); carving (*Upeti*); sewing traditional clothing; and, using respectful language and showing respectful behavior (Cultural Values).

The Logic Model for Program Planning and Evaluation was applied to the process of cultural preservation by using the following steps: (1) Identifying aspects of the culture to be preserved (needs assessment and situation assumptions). This is the place where collaborators were organized and focus groups of stakeholders met to identify and prioritize traditions and cultural aspects to be preserved. (2) Developing the results that were expected or desired (measurable outcomes) for the audience. (3) Identifying who was to be reached and what was to be done (outputs). What age level(s) would be involved in the workshops. What materials would need to be developed, etc. (4) Listing all the internal and external investments (inputs that included collaborators) and material and human resources. (5) Planning the methods to use in measuring the outcomes. This evaluation was incorporated throughout the process.

*Note: It is wise to take the top five of the prioritized traditions or cultural aspects and get them running before trying to do more than there are resources to accomplish.*

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

There was extreme enthusiasm from the youth and adults involved in the project. A few of them have continued with the weaving and fabric printing to sell to the few tourists who come to American Samoa and the local people. Many of the youth take part in group dancing and singing at various events on the islands. Some of them are in a group performing on the mainland to help raise money for the new community library at ASCC. The director of the Samoan and Pacific Studies said, "This project has made my mission to perpetuate the Samoan culture much easier. I can see a difference in the views the youth have toward their Samoan heritage." One youth said, "I love these Samoan arts and crafts. Before this, I was embarrassed when I saw people making our crafts. Now I really do like them. *Fa'afetai tele. Tofa soifua*"

**Accomplishments and Impacts:**

Results included

- changed attitudes of youth toward the Samoan culture;
- acquired knowledge and skills of the culture; completed cultural projects;
- village clubs entered the Samoan Art Festival in the song and *siapo* competitions;
- 8 elementary schools competing in the traditional cultural games during the Food and Farm Fair;
- many completed high school and college Samoan culture class assignments and bilingual projects; and,
- many completed lava lava's and puletasi's (traditional clothing) and explained the importance of these items to the history of the culture.

**Resource Commitment:**

There were a lot of in-kind resources with volunteer time, materials, supplies and technical assistance and instruction donated by the collaborators. Two 4-H staff members .5 FTE's were used on the project with the State Strengthening CYFAR Grant of \$7,000.

**Collaborators:**

Collaboration was fostered with the Department of Education, American Samoa Community College Samoan and Pacific Studies and the Art Department, Amerika Samoa Humanities Council, Village Councils and the Faith Community.

*Fa'afetai tele. Tofa soifua* (Thank you very much. Goodbye)

**Contact Persons:**

Dr. Darlene Pincock Moss, F4-HN Program Manager, Nellie Fuimaono, 4-H Agent II Saufaiga Tuiasosopo, 4-H Agent III, American Samoa Community College, Community and Natural Resources Division, Families, 4-H and Nutrition, PO BOX 5319, PAGO PAGO, AS 96799-5319; Phone: 0-1-1-1-684-699-1575; FAX # 0-1-1-1-684-699-4595;  
E-mail: [darlenemoss@yahoo.com](mailto:darlenemoss@yahoo.com)

---

## Exceptional Learning Opportunities for Livestock Project Members

**Situation:**

A statewide assessment at the "grassroots" level acknowledged the need for more education in livestock projects. This assessment also addressed the desire for the Ohio State Jr. Fair (OSJF) Livestock Programs to set an "educational example" for counties to follow. A major review was

conducted to determine the educational design of livestock projects, how participants are rewarded and what educational materials were available. Many livestock project members are in miscellaneous clubs and their parents (and many times their advisors) do not have a livestock background. As a result, we've found that clientele need as much subject-matter information as possible—right from the start of the project—that the education must be kept strong, so that innocent clientele do not violate laws about drug residue in animals because they have been under-educated.

### **Program Description:**

Oho 4-H created Skillathons, an Outstanding Exhibitor Program (OEP), Caps for the OSJF-Sale of Champions (a set limit on the amount champion animal exhibitors may receive, and put the amount above the caps into the Youth Reserve Program YRP) and developed new Resource Handbooks and adult training materials to keep livestock projects on a strong educational track. This was designed to ensure a future for 4-H and FFA livestock projects. A “Skill-a-thon,” or “Livestock Learning Laboratory,” is an excellent method of involving 4-H'ers in challenging, learn-by-doing activities designed to help youth develop life and project skills. The Skillathon is a series of subject-matter “learning stations” facilitated by a trained facilitator, where each participant is asked a series of questions or assigned specific tasks within a set of stations. The station's facilitator explains the required tasks, provides enthusiastic moral support to the youth and verifies scoring. Experiential learning is the focus of the program, with participants asked to “learn by doing” the specific tasks within each station. This hands-on approach provides youth with an educational experience that develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills, is challenging, and is both exciting and enjoyable. The OEP recognizes youth who excel in the Skill-a-thon, showmanship and in the show ring. A composite score of these three events are totaled to determine ten youth champions for each age, 9 through 18, for beef, poultry, sheep and swine. To emphasize age appropriateness youth are only compared to youth of the same age (*i.e.*, there are 10 showmanship and Skillathon age divisions one each for 9 through 18 years of age. The top-scoring youth out of the ten age champions is recognized as the Outstanding Exhibitor. Learning Laboratory Kits for Beef, Dairy Cattle, Dogs, Goat, Horses, Poultry, Rabbits, Sheep and Swine were developed. The kits contain a variety of “hands-on” experiential learning materials that enhance animal husbandry practices in a fun setting. A teaching video entitled “How To Conduct A Skill-a-thon Using Your Learning Laboratory Kit” was developed for facilitator training and has been used by local county agents to “sell” the educational opportunity with local committees.

Handouts entitled “Skill-a-thon Management Tips” and “Interviewing Tips For Station Facilitators” were developed to address appropriate educational design strategies and to provide facilitators with helpful information on how to make one-on-one interaction valuable for both parties.

New Resource Handbooks for Beef, Sheep and Swine were developed to provide 4-H youth, their parents and part-time livestock producers with comprehensive resource materials for each species in a user-friendly format user friendly that is practical and technically accurate. These books encompass life-cycle production practices, industry issues, safe environmental practices and quality assurance, and are excellent resources for Skillathons and Quiz Bowls.

### **Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

OSU Extension 1.35 FTE. Currently more than 70 percent of Ohio Counties Conduct “Skill-a-thons;” and, ten species-specific Skill-a-thons are conducted annually at the OSJF (1,720 youth participated on a voluntary basis and more than 250 adult volunteers were facilitators in 2001).

Skill-a-thons are conducted at the All-American Sheep Youth Show (since 1999) and the National Swine Registry-Junior National Swine Association events (since 1998). The North American International Livestock Exposition officially sanctioned the National 4-H Livestock Skillathon Contest in 2000.

**Accomplishments & Impacts:**

- **Ability to Read and Understand Feed Tags:** At the 2001 OSJF, more than 86 percent of the Swine Skill-a-thon participants ages 9-18 (257), and more than 85.19 percent of the Market Lamb Skill-a-thon participants ages 11-18 (201) correctly answered feed tag questions.
- **Identification of Correct Injection Sites:** In 2001, 100 percent of the 9-11 and 14-17-year-olds and more than 88 percent in the remaining age groups in the Beef Skill-a-thon accurately indicated the preferred injection locations.
- **Treatment Records and Medication Withdrawal:** In 2001, the 14-16- and 18-year-olds in the Swine Skillathon scored 81 percent and above on the "Hold/Sell" Q. A. Station," indicating the ability to accurately complete a treatment record, calculate withdrawal times and correctly read ear notches to correctly identify animals safe for harvest. More than 48 states and Canada have purchased Learning Laboratory Kits. The Skill-a-thon Training Video (more than 900 distributed) received a "First" in the Communications award division from NAE4-HA in 1999, and another "First" from NACAA in 2002. The Resource Handbooks, which already are being used by numerous states, received a "First" in the Educational Package division from NAE4-HA in 2002. Since 1995, the OSJF-YRP has distributed \$687,350 to 5497 youth.

**Resource Commitment:**

Annual sponsorship from commodity organizations for Beef (\$250), Sheep (\$250), Swine (\$250) and Poultry (\$3,800); ABN Radio and TV; The Ohio Country Journal (\$300); OSU Extension (\$5,000); the OSJF (\$5,000); OH 4-H (\$2,000) and FFA (\$2,000) Foundations; and, a grant from National 4-H Foundation for \$6,000 to develop the Skill-a-thon Video.

**Collaborators:**

Numerous county agents across the state and throughout the Nation in both Agriculture and 4-H Youth Development; numerous veterinary and livestock state specialists, both in Ohio and several additional states; the Ohio State Fair Livestock Director; The Ohio Dept. of Agriculture; the Ohio Curriculum Materials Service; FFA; and, numerous allied industry.

**Contact Person:**

Jodi Black, 4-H Livestock Youth Specialist - Dept. of Animal Science, 2029 Fyffe Road  
Columbus, OH 43210-1095; Phone: 614-871-7697; Fax: 614-292-1515; E-mail:  
jblack2@columbus.rr.com

**Base program areas to which this program applies:**

4-H Youth Development, Agriculture, and Leadership & Volunteer Development.

---



## **Dolores County Broadcasting Network (DCBN) 4-H Evening News Program**

### **Situation:**

Dolores County is a small (population 840), remote rural county in Southwest Colorado with few resources it can dedicate to youth programs. Starting in 1996, the Dolores County Broadcasting Network (DCBN) has been operated and managed by the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension office in Dolores County, with the 4-H club's involvement, a key component in developing DCBN.

### **Program Description:**

Through a series of grants submitted by the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Office in Dolores County, funds have been secured for equipment and personnel to operate a high tech and superior quality TV news program. The 4-H Evening News Program currently involves youth from the third to ninth grades. (This past semester, two second-graders were admitted to the program, at the request of their parents.) Acting as news anchors, producers, directors, camera people, teleprompter operators and sound and video engineers, the youth produce and direct their own news show. The adult staff arrives at 2 p.m. to start show preparations and the youth arrive at 4 p.m. With the help of two paid student assistants, an adult technical director, an adult program coordinator and three student volunteers, the show is prepared, rehearsed, technical assignments are made in time for the show to air at 4:30. The Evening News Program lasts approximately 10 to 30 minutes, depending on the length of news articles and whether there is a person to interview or special presentation planned. Periodically, a show review is held to "fine-tune" news delivery.

### **Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

Youth, their parents and their teachers are the main stakeholders in this project. In 1996, six youth were involved in the program. Today, 48 are involved, representing 19 percent of all eligible youth from grades 3-12. As the TV studio can only accommodate 16 youth at a time, teams of four news teams are identified (some youth are part of multiple teams) for the Monday-through-Thursday Evening News Program. It is fun and not considered homework. As the youth put it, "We love to play with all the cool equipment." At most shows, parents view the program from inside the studio or on one of the monitors. Parents are encouraged to view the show and offer what comments they may have on improving the program. Due to popular demand a TV monitor was installed in the hallway outside the studio so parents can view the show on TV, but also see the youth performing live. Funding for DCBN has been readily available from contributor stakeholders because of the youth involvement.

### **Accomplishments and Impacts:**

DCBN has a broadcast radius of 30 miles, reaching a potential audience of approximately 5,000 people in Dolores County, Western San Miguel County, Northern Montezuma County and Southeast Utah. The major goal and clear impact of the program have been the ability to provide a non-sports alternative for local after-school programming, not previously available in Dolores County. The life skills promoted and fostered through the program are to

- Help youth develop non-sports teamwork skills in preparing and delivering the news program.

- Improve verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to appear live on camera with poise.
- Expose the youth to, and allow the operation of, high-tech equipment.
- The youth have so much fun with this program that they do not realize how much they are learning in the process. Several comments from teachers and parents were conveyed expressing how the youth have improved in school as a result of participating in this Evening News Program

**Resource commitment:**

Dolores County currently provides \$6,000 annually for equipment maintenance and personnel. The 4-H Evening News Program is currently funded by the Colorado Trust for 5 years (\$92,000). Additional cash and in-kind contributors to the 4-H program include:

- |                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| • Region 9            | \$7,500  |
| • US Forest Service   | \$3,300  |
| • CSUCE               | \$6,000  |
| • CATI                | \$27,900 |
| • San Juan RC&D       | \$1,500  |
| • CSUCE 4-H           | \$5,000  |
| • Colorado Youth Fund | \$3,600  |
| • SWTV Trans. Assoc.  | \$20,000 |

**Collaborators:**

The following partners helped make DCBN and the 4-H Evening News possible:

- AT&T Cable of Durango
- Colorado Advanced Technology Institute
- Colorado Region 9 Economic Development District
- Colorado State University Cooperative Extension (campus, regional director and the Dolores County office)
- Community Bank of Dove Creek
- Dolores County Commissioners,
- Dove Creek Chamber of Commerce
- San Juan Resource Conservation and Development Service
- SW Colorado Television Translator Association
- The Colorado Trust After School Program
- Town of Dove Creek
- USDA Forest Service
- Western Dolores County Economic Development Council

**Contact Person:**

Daniel Fernandez, Dolores County Director, Colorado State University Cooperative Extension, PO Box 527 Dove Creek, CO 81324; Phone: 970-677-2283; Fax: 970-677-2815; E-mail: danfern@coop.ext.colostate.edu

**Base program areas to which this program applies:**  
4-H Youth Development

---

**Goal 4:**

**Extension, 4-H and our land-grant institutions will advance the field of youth development education.**

## **Celebrate the Child**

**Situation:**

Ohio County youth are faced with many challenges and, unfortunately, some are making dangerous decisions. There is a movement to promote the development of young people into healthy caring, and responsible adults. By building developmental assets, Ohio 4-H strives to impact the lives of youth and adults in powerful ways.

**Program Description:**

“Celebrate the Child,” a day to honor children, attracted more than 4,000 people. At this event, attendants learn about assets and the joy children bring into our lives and the world. Youth were the manpower behind this event. Booths were provided where topics such as family development, asset building, family sharing time and reading were discussed.

“Amazing Asset Academy,” a statewide conference held in Ohio County, works on building 40 Developmental Assets. Funded by a coalition of local community groups, more than 100 youth and adults attended this conference. Some of the workshops included

- The Power of Assets to Change the Future of Our Youth;
- Public Relations;
- How to Get Your Message Out;
- Mentoring Youth;
- Assets Before, During, and After School;
- Community Partnering with Assets;
- Planning Your Own Asset Celebration;
- Connecting Faith and Assets;
- Businesses and Assets;
- Youth Council Training;
- Creating Youth and Adult Partnerships.

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

Growing up is hard, and young people need adults in their lives to talk to them, support them and set high expectations and boundaries for them. Youth and adults are becoming more aware of these programs. Youth need to be told repetitively to say “no” to drugs, alcohol and other harmful actions.

***Results of the Assets Program:***

- 100 percent of community leaders would support more youth programs and opportunities
- 96 percent of 12-year-old students believe it is wrong to use an illegal drug.
- 74 percent of the participants feel they now have strong family support.
- Substance abuse among tenth grade Ohio County students has dropped the past 2 years.
- 73 percent have a positive view of their future.

- 94 percent of the students in the program have increased their self-esteem to “medium” or “high.
- 83 percent increased their academic skills.
- 85 percent of the students improved their behavior.

The 40 Developmental Assets are a step in the right direction to building a healthy community.

**Accomplishments and Impact:**

- More than 600 youth in Ohio County have donated thousands of hours of service.
- Two “Assets” are broadcast daily at a local middle school.
- 4-H youth and adults have donated more than 4,000 community service and volunteer hours.
- Youth are frequently praised for their hard work.
- Youth are becoming more aware of the 40 Developmental Assets and how important they are to their personal growth.

As a result of this conference, other counties in Kentucky are forming coalitions to address youth problems in their communities.

**Collaborators:**

Ohio County Extension Office, the local middle school, all the volunteers, local businesses and organizations and the Ohio County Extension 4-H/Youth Development Agent.

**Contact Person:**

Gary Druin, Ohio County 4-H/Youth Development Agent, Ohio County Extension Office, P.O. Box 66, Hartford, KY 42347-0066; Phone: 270-298-7441; Fax: 270-298-4660; E-mail: [gdruin@uky.edu](mailto:gdruin@uky.edu)

**Base Program Areas to which this Program Applies:**

4-H Youth Development

---

## **MN BEST Promoting Youth Development: A Community Approach**

**Situation:**

Quality out-of-school opportunities for youth are often hard to find and hard to operate. While youth workers typically bring a deep commitment to help young people, they seldom come to the work with a predictable set of educational experiences, a shared philosophy and language, a common understanding of human development, or shared ideas of youth needs and strategies to meet them. MN BEST supports documented community and family needs for quality out-of-school programs with highly relevant University resources including research on child and youth development, frameworks and strategies for best practices, and accredited teaching and facilitation of adult learning for working professionals.

**Program Description:**

MN BEST works to improve the quality of community youth development programs through better preparation and training for adults who work with youth in the out-of-school time.

Initially begun in the Twin Cities as part of the national BEST program supported by the Dewitt Wallace Reader's Digest Fund, MN BEST is a statewide program using locally based Extension and community facilitators to provide an affordable, research-based, and community-focused program. The 24-hour base curriculum *Promoting Youth Development: A Community Approach* evolved from a local youth worker needs assessment outlining the needs of professional youth workers and the *Advancing Youth Development* curriculum from the Academy for Educational Development. Participants come together over a series of sessions to think critically and reflect on their own practice and best practices in youth development.

MN BEST provides interactive learning sessions in the philosophy, language and best practices of positive youth development. The training sessions are built on the premise that youth development work functions in three key areas: The Work, The Young People and The Youth Worker. MN BEST uses this concept as a way to stimulate discussion and inquiry around a basic understanding of youth work. The program brings research-based materials and a process of reflection and engagement that encourages youth workers to make direct connections to their daily work. Participants have opportunities to network with other youth workers and discover new ways to put their skills and abilities to work for the best in youth outcomes.

#### **Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

Throughout the course of the project a total of 4.25 FTE's were committed to the project, representing the work of five campus staff and six field staff. MN BEST programs are offered quarterly throughout the state, with an average of 20 participants in each offering. More than 1,000 youth workers from a broad spectrum of agencies and organizations participated in MN BEST between 2000 and 2002. The program participants represent a wide range of programs and job responsibilities:

- 89.7 percent of participants were professional youth workers.
- 31.4 percent of participants had not been exposed to youth development prior to the training.
- More than half did not have other opportunities for professional development in youth development.

In a program satisfaction survey, participants overwhelmingly (84 percent and higher on all replies) reported the training increased their sense of purpose in their work, built greater understanding of youth development concepts, gave practical strategies for integrating a youth development approach, and helped them focus their work with youth. Nearly half use the information gained from the program every day or very often. Sixty-five percent of participants indicated the program was above average or the best professional development program they ever had.

#### **Accomplishments and Impacts:**

After 6 months, participants rated the training for impact on their practice. When looking at specific practices covered by the curriculum, participants evaluated the impact the training had on their practice. While many of the youth development practices listed were not completely new to any participant, several were new ideas for participants. In most cases, roughly 18-25 percent of the participants reported the training exposed them to the practice.

The youth development practices in which the training had the most impact or exposed them to the practice were

- Encourage youth to implement activities (74 percent improved, 22 percent exposed);
- Plan activities that achieve youth outcomes and meet basic youth needs (75 percent improved, 19 percent exposed);
- Document program changes based on feedback from youth (57 percent improved, 24 percent exposed);
- Participate in communitywide activities that promote youth development (67 percent improved, 17 percent exposed);
- Engage youth in youth-led community activities (57 percent improved, 23 percent exposed).

**Resource Commitment:**

Minnesota 4-H Foundation	\$ 23,000
University of Minnesota Extension Service	\$150,000 3 year Comprehensive Grant
Center for 4-H Youth Development	\$ 50,000 in cash and in-kind support
Dewitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund	\$240,000 3 year grant

**Collaborators:**

The program collaborators include: Center for 4-H Youth Development, county-based Extension Educators, University of Minnesota- Duluth, Minnesota 4-H Foundation, Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board, Youth Development Leadership Master's Program in the College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota Extension Service, and the Dewitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.

**Contact Person:**

Elee Wood, Program Director, Center for 4-H Youth Development, University of Minnesota, McNamara Alumni Center, Suite 270B, 200 Oak Street SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455;  
Phone: 612-624-1972; Fax: 612-624-6905; E-mail: woodx053@umn.edu

**Base program areas to which this program applies:**

4-H Youth Development

---

## **Teens Serving Food Safely**

**Situation:**

Foodborne illness remains a major public health concern. About 5,000 people die, 325,000 are hospitalized and 76 million become ill due to foodborne illness each year (CDC, 1999). Nationwide, foodservice establishments have been linked to a majority of cases of foodborne illness, according to CDC data. Foodborne illness outbreaks that occur in homes are vastly under-reported.

Food-related businesses play a vital role in the North Dakota economy. There are more than 1500 foodservice businesses, 425 food and beverage stores and 125 food manufacturing businesses in North Dakota, according to Census Bureau County Business Patterns data. More than 50,000 employees in North Dakota are engaged either in full- or part-time jobs relating to food handling. Food-related activities and projects remain popular among North Dakota youth involved in 4-H program activities and other youth-related programming. A job at the local café

or fast food establishment is often the first employment experience for many teens. Among American 15-year-olds with jobs, 29 percent work in eating and drinking establishments. With the rapid turnover that occurs in foodservice work, training in safe food handling occurs sporadically, if at all. Providing food safety training for teenage food handlers could have a significant impact on public health.

### **Program Description:**

This project developed a food safety curriculum for use with teen food handlers. Following a review of available food safety educational materials, a food safety curriculum, “Teens Serving Food Safely,” consisting of five 50-minute food safety lessons with hands-on activities based on the national “Fight BAC” and “Thermy” campaigns, was written by the project team. Two Extension educators conducted the five 50-minute lesson plans in four schools in two counties. The participants were students enrolled in a Family and Consumer Science class in each of the schools. The lessons included lecture material based on the concepts of “Clean,” “Separate,” “Cook” and “Chill.” All included a variety of educational techniques. Two pilot tests were completed, one in spring 2001, and the second in fall 2001. Students and teachers evaluated the lessons. The lessons were revised to better meet the needs of the students after the first pilot test and again after the second pilot test.

Students completed a pre-test prior to any education and a post-test at the conclusion of the five sessions. Students who passed the post-test with a score of 80 percent or higher received a “Certificate of Completion.” As an added incentive to do additional homework, students became eligible for prize drawings based on their participation in other activities (Internet searches for information, homework involving family food safety). A followup survey to determine retention of learning and changes in behavior was conducted approximately 1 month later.

### **Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

A statewide survey of North Dakotans has revealed that food safety training for volunteers and foodservice handlers is an area of concern. Input was solicited from inspectors across North Dakota, and two inspectors acted as content reviewers. Two FTE’s were committed to the project.

### **Accomplishments and Impacts:**

To date, more than 300 students have completed the five-lesson series and passed the exam. During Pilot Test II, 126 students ranging in age from 15 to 19 participated in the food safety training in two counties/four schools. The average test scores increased from 59 percent on the pre-test to 96 percent correct on the post-test. The followup test score average was 93 percent, indicating good retention of the facts they learned. About 90 percent rated serving food safely as “important” or “very important” to them. About 71 percent had been involved in food preparation for the public; of those, about 24.6 percent of the students had been involved in food preparation for the public as a volunteer (4-H, etc), 37.7 percent had worked in a restaurant, and 18 percent had been involved in another type of food service.

On the followup survey, more than 84 percent reported washing their hands more often when preparing food; 66.4 percent were more careful about cleaning and sanitizing; 58.4 percent had shared their knowledge about food safety with other people; 25.7 percent reported checking their refrigerator or freezer temps at home more often; and, 31 percent reported thawing foods in the refrigerator or microwave. About 19.5 percent reported using a food thermometer to measure the

temperature of food more often, and 36.3 percent had applied what they learned when preparing food for the public.

About 90 letters were sent to foodservice/restaurant managers in the sites where training had taken place alerting them of the training that youth in their communities had completed and encouraging them to ask youth applicants if they had been part of the program. Some businesses provided monetary incentives.

**Resource Commitment:**

A grant of \$2,500 was received from the North Dakota 4-H Foundation to support the project. Funding for the timeslip program assistant (\$2,500) was from a USDA-funded Food Safety and Quality project. The results of this pilot program formed the basis of a USDA integrated research, education and extension food safety grant, which was recently funded for \$234,000. This project will move the pilot program across the state and, possibly, the region.

**Collaborators:**

A Food and Nutrition Specialist, Extension Agent, Food Safety Program Assistant, two state health inspectors and four Family and Consumer Science Teachers.

**Contact Person:**

Julie Garden-Robinson, Assistant Professor and Food and Nutrition Specialist, North Dakota State University Extension Service, EML 351, Fargo, ND 58105-5057; Phone: 701-231-7187; Fax: 701-231-8568; E-mail: [jgardenr@ndsuent.nodak.edu](mailto:jgardenr@ndsuent.nodak.edu)

**Base program areas to which this program applies:**

Nutrition, Diet and Health  
4-H Youth Development

---